

1. When writing on company letterhead you are contributing to the reputation of the company. Every single letter--good or bad-- affects that reputation. It makes good sense then to turn out the best letter we can. This is not always easy because some of us have inherited from our office ancestors a "Gay Nineties" style of writing. This out-dated way of saying things often confuses the point and muffles the spirit of our letters.

2. What we must strive for is a natural, direct letter which is more inviting to read and easier to understand. And we should remember that natural, friendly letters create good will--a must in anybody's business.

3. Some suggestions which may help you/ to achieve a good letter:

No need to acknowledge receipt of a letter. Your reply to it automatically acknowledges that you received it.

You correspondent knows what he wrote to you about. There is no need to tell him this in detail.

The active voice (we understand instead of it is understood) is much more effective, and less ambiguous.

Avoid complex ways of saying things. Better impressions, and better understanding result from expressing ideas in simple words.

One word will do the work of five (we believe instead of we are of the opinion that).

Avoid the expression "enclosed herewith"; the herewith is unnecessary.

Don't say "please advise us as to" when what you really mean is "please let us know".

Use simple phrases instead of the complex. They are easier to understand and your reader can concentrate his attention on your ideas rather than your words and phrases. As the communication specialists say, "Write to express, not impress."


Editorial Consultant

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